

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-40 (canceled).

Claim 41 (currently amended). A method for making possible the identification of various microscopic contaminants in samples by certified personnel in a laboratory by:
using a person semi-skilled in focussing a microscope to obtain photomicrographs of said samples collected in their original, natural environment without the use of a culturing agent;
electronically transmitting said photomicrographs to the laboratory; and,
identifying the microscopic contaminants by a skilled mycologist or other certified person, wherein said microscopic contaminants do not comprise plant anomalies.

Claim 42 (previously presented). The method of claim 41 wherein said steps of employing, transmitting are completed "real time".

Claim 43 (previously presented). The method of claim 41 wherein said steps of employing, transmitting and identifying are completed in less than 24 hours rather than a typical two week period.

Claim 44 (previously presented). The method of claim 41 wherein said steps of employing, transmitting and identifying are completed without requiring use of growth media or testing methodologies

Claim 45 (previously presented). The method of claim 44 wherein the microscopic contaminants are molds and the photomicrographs of the molds are captured directly in the natural environment of the contaminants without including the use of microscopic slides.

Claim 46 (previously presented). The method of claim 44 wherein the photomicrographs are captured directly from pieces of carpet or ceiling tile or cotton swabs.

Claim 47 (previously presented). The method of claim 44 wherein the microscopic contaminants are fungal spores and the photomicrographs of the spores are taken on a glass slide from an air-sampling mechanism.

Claim 48 (previously presented). The method of claim 41 wherein the photomicrographs are obtained using a digital camera by a semi-skilled person, the camera being positioned directly over the microscopic contaminants to be identified.

Claim 49 (previously presented). The method of claim 48 wherein the digital camera has a image capture resolution of at least about 400,000 pixels by 800,000 pixels.

Claim 50 (previously presented). The method of claim 41 wherein the photomicrographs are obtained using a digital camera operated by battery power and transported by a remote-controlled vehicle into air ducts or beneath building structures.

Claim 51 (previously presented). The method of claim 41 wherein the microscopic contaminants remain in their original natural environment during analysis so as to eliminate adulteration of the contaminants during transportation to a laboratory and so as to avoid introduction of contaminants into said laboratory.